



Easy Rider

Loudoun County Office of Transportation Services Transit Newsletter

July 2006



New LC Transit Bus Schedules for Summer 2007

As most of you are aware, the County will be receiving seven new commuter buses this summer. The Board of Supervisors approved the purchase of these buses for expansion of service into the Dulles South Area (South Riding, Stone Ridge, etc.), extension of the reverse commute service, and to relieve some of the current overcrowding issues on the buses. A **proposed** schedule has been drafted to accommodate this new service. This draft schedule was reviewed by the Commuter Bus Advisory Board (CBAB) at their June meeting. CBAB supported publicizing the schedule for a rider comment period, pending inclusion of some recommended changes.

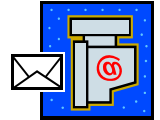


The draft schedules were sent out in a Bus Biz on July 7, 2006 for rider comment. Comments will be accepted through July 28. Comments should be emailed to rideshare@loudoun.gov. All comments will be compiled and reviewed by both CBAB and staff. Final versions of the schedule will be publicized to all riders at least two weeks prior to the effective date.

Please use the following link to access the draft schedules. Note that a summary of the changes to each schedule is included on the last page of the schedule.

<http://www.loudoun.gov/bus/#Expand>

If you would like to sign up to receive email notifications from the County through Bus Biz, send us an email at rideshare@loudoun.gov.



Air Quality for the Summer

As most of you are aware, the Washington Metropolitan Region is classified as a non-attainment area when it comes to air quality conformity. What that basically means is that we have bad air and that we need to take steps to make it better or at least not make it any worse. So during the months of May through September the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) forecasts the air quality. The air quality can range from Green which is okay air to Red which is very unhealthy.

Residents are encouraged to take measures to help improve the air quality, particularly on Air Quality Code Orange and Code Red days. Some of these measures include not mowing their lawns with gasoline powered equipment, not fueling vehicles until after dusk, reducing the amount of vehicle trips, taking transit and/or teleworking.



The elderly and young children are encouraged to stay indoors on very unhealthy air quality days to reduce the risk associated with poor air quality such as shortness of breath, headaches, eye and throat irritation and even lung damage. One good thing to note is that on Air Quality Code Red days Loudoun County Transit buses are free to all passengers. Encourage your co-workers to try LC Transit on Air Quality Code Red days.

Park and Ride Lot Updates

Leesburg Permanent (Sycolin Road/County-owned Shellhorn tract): The County finalized a contract with JMT Engineering for the design of this lot and the oversight of the construction process. This project remains on schedule, with a late summer 2007 projected opening.

Leesburg Temporary: Mitchell and Best continues to work through the land development process and issues related to the development of the Barber & Ross site with the Town of Leesburg. Loudoun County Office of Transportation Services staff continues to monitor the timeline on this process, as it will impact the length of our lease of this space.

Hamilton: VDOT has provided their input on the entrance improvements to the proposed lot at the Hamilton Safety Center. Site plans will be drawn with these improvements included and will be submitted to the Abundant Life Church, and then the County for review and approval. The Church of the Latter Day Saints (the current Hamilton stop) has provided an extension on our current agreement.

Lowes Island/Cascades: OTS staff is finalizing lease language with Our Lady of Hope Catholic Church to allow the use of this lot later this summer as an additional park and ride lot for Lowes Island/Cascades riders.

Electronic Farebox Update

Currently, Loudoun County Transit is tentatively scheduled for fare box installation in January 2007. Staff continues to remain actively involved in this regional project, and will communicate with riders as implementation nears.



“Bus Repair Request” Forms

The County has developed a new way for riders to alert staff of repairs that may be needed on the county-owned LC Transit Buses. The new form called Bus Repair Request is available under Quick Links on the “Commuter Bus” page of the website. Riders are encouraged to use this form for items they notice on the buses that need fixing such as broken seats, reading lights or handles, as well as damage to seats from food or dirt/grease, etc. The County will relay the repair request to Veolia Transportation for immediate attention. The buses are constantly monitored by County staff and outside contractors, but occasionally some of these minor repairs are not immediately noticed when walkthroughs on the equipment are completed. So here’s your chance to be the eyes and ears for us and let us know if you find something that needs attention.

Unveiling New Website Design

Office of Transportation Services staff along with a lot of help from the Public Information Office staff would like to unveil the new Loudoun County Transit website. Staff would also like thank members of the Commuter Bus Advisory Board (CBAB) for submitting website ideas and for reviewing the various iterations along the way. Visit www.loudoun.gov/bus to see the many new and improved changes to the site. Here are a few highlights.

Quick Links – the first thing you now see is a Quick Links bar that can take you to such things as Bike on Bus forms, Repair forms, Schedules, Load Statistics and Lost and Found.

Service Alerts – this first blue link on the left is where County staff will post any service changes, disruptions, schedule changes, stop relocations, etc. This information will be posted almost immediately via this link.



[Service Updates](#)

[Commuter Bus](#)

[Commuter Bus Schedules](#)

[New Rider Information](#)

[Park & Ride Lots](#)

[Commuter Bus Frequently
Asked Questions](#)

[Commuting Options](#)

[Regional Bus & Rail](#)

[Local Bus](#)

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Schedules – Staff has reworked the layout of all the schedules. Schedules now can be viewed and printed on 8 ½ x 11 size paper. The schedules are also broken down by specific pick up locations such as Purcellville and Leesburg. These new schedules list just the departures from Leesburg to Rosslyn,

Pentagon, DC. This allows the passengers to have just the information they need and not be overloaded with all the other pickup locations if they are not relevant to their commute.

Quick Links-

Go!

Other Features: There is a link to send a direct email to staff; a FAQ link, a regional bus and rail link, a new rider link and a link to other commuting options.

Check it out for yourself. We like the new site and think you will too.

A “Pat On The Back” for one of our Wonderful Drivers

I've been meaning to sit down and drop you a note to tell you about an experience I had on LC19 on the Tuesday last month (I think it was June 20) when we had the road closures in DC. The instructions the riders received was to meet the bus on Madison because Independence was closed. When we got to Madison, the police had blocked it

off the street and re-routed us to Independence. The driver (I'm sorry, I don't know his name) was concerned over the possibility that riders would be at Madison, not knowing that Madison had been blocked off. We went down Independence, picked up one passenger who hadn't gotten the word to meet us on Madison then took our normal route towards the Ronald Reagan Building. The driver stopped the bus at the corner of Madison and ran down the street to see if there were any passengers waiting for us. He came back a few minutes later with one gentleman who had been waiting for the bus. LC19 is the last bus out of DC without having to metro to Rosslyn or West Falls Church, the fact that your driver went beyond what was expected of him speaks highly of him and makes me proud to be one of your riders. Although it took us almost 3 hours to get home that night, your driver kept our spirits high and got us all home safely.

Please pass on my appreciation to the driver... If I'm ever stuck in a similar situation, I hope I'm on his bus.

Thanks!!!

*Linda M. Parker
LC Transit Bus Rider*

Stephanie Bell, General Manager of Veolia Transportation-Loudoun Service, had this to say, “I was delighted when I heard that Earl had used his professional skills as a Motor Coach Operator to recognize that passengers may not be aware that the road had closed and they were now on the normal route. Under normal circumstances, leaving a bus is strictly prohibited; in this case, Earl did a great job by running out to locate those who were unaware.”

Loudoun County Office of Transportation Services would like to thank the driver Earl for going above and beyond that day to help get our passengers home safely during a difficult commute. And in honor of his exceptional service presented him with a gift certificate.

FY 2006 by the Numbers

Total Passenger Trips	602,333
Total Long Haul (LC to DC)	444,932
Total Cascades/Lowes Island	100,879
Total Reverse Commute	56,522
Total Passenger Miles Saved <i>(Total passenger miles saved is the amount of miles that passengers would have driven in their own single occupant vehicle if they did not ride the bus.)</i>	19,870,828 <i>Which equals 82 trips to the moon or 793 trips around the world</i>
<u>Vehicle Emissions Reduced</u> (air pollution):	
Total tons of NOx Saved	15.3
Total tons of VOCs Saved	4.75

FY2006 by the Dates

August 2005: A new 21-bus schedule went into effect and moved into new Leesburg temporary park and ride lot at Barber and Ross.

September 2005: Added new Loudoun to Washington runs to help alleviate overcrowding.

December 2005: Ran the Inclement Weather Schedule twice, operated a special schedule for the Christmas week and held the Annual Driver/Busmeister Appreciation Dinner.

February 2006: The Board of Supervisors authorized the Purchasing Agent to award the contract for the procurement of seven new commuter coaches.

March 2006: The Board directed a fare increase that went into effect.



May 2006: Record average daily ridership of 2500 passenger trips was achieved.

June 2006: Awarded contract for design and engineering of the permanent Leesburg Park and Ride Lot.

Easy Rider is produced by Loudoun County Office of Transportation Staff. Article suggestions should be sent to rideshare@loudoun.gov.